

Vista Royale Computer Club

Meeting Minutes March 8, 2018

President Mike Johnson welcomed 30 members and guests this week and reminded members that the Association still needs proxies if you have not submitted yours. Also the time changes on Sunday evening.

This week we did a Pot Pourri Program with basic computer tweaks and tips by Sandy which she figured needing demonstration after observing members in the Lab. Many are old standards that you may have forgotten. Here is a list of her demonstration:

Difference between a URL address box, which has an 'i' in it or a search box with a magnifying glass in your browser [Chrome, Internet Explorer, etc]. The URL box takes you to the actual site you want and the Search box searches for multiple sites that may apply. It gives you hundreds of sites, many of which are bad and/or ones you do not want. Be aware of the difference.

How to make a window full screen by grabbing the top and bouncing it off the top instead of having to hit the maximize button.

How to search your whole computer by pressing the 'Windows' icon on the left of your task bar and typing in a word/words which may be in the app, title or the body of your file. You can click on the results to open the app or file.

'Find' [Ctrl key + F] is somewhat similar, only its strength is that you can 'replace' a word or phrase with a new or corrected one.

Snipping Tool is a small app on all computers which allow you to copy parts of pictures, web pages, documents, emails, etc. Then you can save or paste it into any of the above. It has lots & lots of uses, especially capturing specific parts of web pages. Use the 'search tip' above to find it and then try it out before next Thursday.

Then Vicky presented her segment about technology changes.

She talked again about Top-Windows-Tutorials when you are getting ready to change over to Windows 10. Find it in the 'training' section of www.VRCC.info.

She recommends watching the first one before you set up a new computer. These free videos are so great. The first free videos are a promotion for the "Windows 10 Superguide"; a more comprehensive set that is available for \$29 USD.

A few years ago Vicky talked about converting your music CDs to MP3s (MP3 files are music in a compressed format) in preparation for the day when CD players would no longer be in cars. This week Best Buy announced that they would no longer be selling CD's in their stores and Target is soon to follow.

She also pointed out that as she predicted, new cars no longer come with a CD player. Instead they allow you to play music from your phone or from a USB stick. She recommended that we not use a standard USB stick, but rather something like a SanDisk *Fit* which is much smaller. These shorter USB drives don't protrude as far so you are much less likely to snag them on something.

It is very easy to convert CD's to MP3's because they are already digital. Records and tapes are analog, and the conversion process is tedious, but we do have a turntable in the lab, that can be borrowed for that purpose.

"Fair use" lets you convert the music you purchased to be playable on your other devices; however it becomes piracy when you give copies to other people.

Movie copying rules are different as most commercial DVDs have copy protection. Breaking the digital rights management protection from the DVD's and Video Tapes you bought even to make a copy for your personal use is currently forbidden under law.

If video tapes are copy protected why do we have a **VHS to DVD conversion station** in the lab? We have that in the lab to digitize your own HOME MOVIES. The process is real-time, but it is easy. No more difficult than recording a DVD. You can always send out your VHS tapes to have them converted, but the cost typically goes for \$19 a tape. If you do it in our Lab, your cost will be 50¢yes 50 cents for the cost of the DVD.

Once digitized we recommend converting your movies to MP4, a universal remote, playable on many devices.

There is a easy to use movie editing software on all our Windows 7 machines. The software will only be there until January 2020 at which time the computers will be loaded with Windows 10. The Moviemaker software was discontinued and is no longer available from reputable sites. Replacement software that does the same thing as Moviemaker starts at \$79 or more, not affordable for 10 machines.

If you would like to punch up your movies, for free, it would be best to do it BEFORE 2020!!!

A question came up about slides. We do have a slide converter that works with Windows XP and we kept a Windows XP machine in the Lab just for these things.

Vicky brought in her 'NUC' to do her demo. A NUC is Intel's version of a Raspberry Pi and replaces your bulky tower. You probably never heard of either of these because they are geared towards the super-geek and considered 'kit computers'. The reason Vicky thought they were interesting for the club, is that they appeal to someone who wants a giant screen, but their desktop space is at a premium. People that have eyesight issues, live in small condos and have multiple homes might find them appealing even at the premium price you pay for one.

Next week, Vicky will be talking about 'Cloud Computing' with Google Drive, iCloud, etc. Sandy will show an alternative: 'Dropbox' and more tips if we have time. Bring a friend, spouse, neighbor..... 9:30 Thursday morning March 15th in the Pine Arbor Kitchen.

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